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**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

In the Application of: )  
Richard P. Lamothe ) Examiner: Kenneth E. Peterson  
for: APPARATUS FOR SLITTING, )  
MERGING AND CUTTING A ) Group Art Unit: 3724  
CONTINUOUS PAPER WEB )  
Serial No.: 10/087,559 )  
Filed: March 1, 2002 ) (Our Docket No.: 4341-0032-1)

Hartford, Connecticut, April 30, 2004

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**RESPONSE TO FINAL OFFICE ACTION**

S I R:

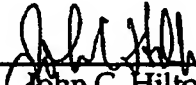
In response to the Office Action dated March 31, 2004, the following amendments and remarks are respectfully submitted. This Response is intended to put this application in condition for allowance if the Examiner considers newly added claims 24-28 allowable over the prior art cited. No new search should be required since all limitations were included in the claims as originally filed, and as originally searched. All claims, including those withdrawn earlier, are presented here. However, claims 1-23 can be cancelled in the event the Examiner finds claims 24-28 to be allowable.

In conclusion, the present invention does not require movement of one ribbon at a speed higher than that of the other ribbon, and deals instead with adjusting the path taken by each of the ribbons so that both ribbons arrive at the cutting station in properly indexed relationship to one another. This is a problem not even recognized in the prior art cited, and therefore the Examiner's case for obviousness depends to a large extent on hindsight, and relies heavily on the present disclosure as suggesting for the first time a solution to the problem presented; namely that of indexing superposed ribbons slit from a common web.

Applicant believes that no fees are due in filing this Response. However, authorization is hereby granted to charge our Deposit Account No. 13-0235 in the event any such fees are owed.

Respectfully submitted,

By

  
John C. Hilton  
Registration No: 22,965  
Attorney for Applicants

McCORMICK, PAULDING & HUBER LLP  
CityPlace II, 185 Asylum Street  
Hartford, CT 06103-3402  
(860) 549-5290